



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
ORDER OF THE ARROW

LA440 - Working with Youth, Near Youth, and Adults

On-line Training

Session Overview

- Your Lodge is composed of youth, near youth, and adults.
- Each of these groups has unique dynamics, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Learning how to effectively recruit, communicate with these groups, and how to resolve conflict, is key to your success as Lodge Adviser



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Learning Objectives

- Learn the definitions of youth, near youth, and adult, and their unique strengths and weaknesses
- Develop communication strategies for each group
- Develop conflict resolution strategies for each group
- Develop recruitment and retention strategies for each group



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Who are your Members?

- Youth Member:
 - Ages 12-20
 - Varying levels of OA/Scouting experience
- Near-Youth Member:
 - Ages 21-27 (Upper limit is approximate)
 - Usually very experienced, but through the lens of being a youth
- Adult Member:
 - Technically ages 21+, but here we consider 28+



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Youth Members

- Commonly age 13-20
- Strengths: Varied backgrounds give rise to creative ideas and surging enthusiasm
- Considerations:
 - May not understand logistical constraints
 - May have communication/transportation issues outside of their control if living at home
 - BSA Youth Protection applies to Scouts <18
 - Youth may be easily influenced by adults



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Near-Youth Members

- Ages 21-27; were youth members with some youth members still in the Lodge
- Were very active as youth, and have a broad understanding of the program
- Considerations:
 - May have trouble stepping back from leading and letting the current youth leaders take over.
 - May have college, early career, and new family obligations outside of Scouting.



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Adult Members

- Any member 21 well removed from the youth in the Lodge.
- Several typical life stories:
 - Active as a youth, took time off, now have a son in the program as a youth.
 - No prior Scouting experience, now active to support their son as a youth.



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Bonus Group: The Lifers

- Usually active as youth Lodge Leadership
- Stayed active in Scouting/OA
- Considerations:
 - Very valuable assets for experience, program knowledge, and historical information
 - Challenge is to tap this experience while keeping the Lodge under your leadership.



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Communication

- Effective communication is the key to working with these different groups
 - How: Phones, email, social media, in person
- Each person has their own preferred communication medium, it is critical to identify this right away
 - Adults - phone calls and emails
 - Youth - social media
 - Near-Youth - email and texting



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Can you Hear Me Now?

- Communicating with phones is powerful, but different for each group
 - Youth members
 - May not have their own phone
 - If they do: texting and web based interaction.
 - Make sure they understand the importance of answering calls and voicemail!
 - Set clear expectations up front.
 - Adult members
 - May not have the latest smartphones
 - Work out a communication plan when recruited!



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The Digital age

- Electronic communication is the de facto norm
- Email: when not calling, many adults and near-youth will use email. Youth members may not be reliably checking email, or even have email account
- Adult members may only use email. If youth rely on social media to communicate, you must find a way to also get information to the adults in your leadership corps.
- Youth members must be aware of different communication habits, and may need to be periodically checked-in to maintain continuity.



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Strategies for Effective Communication: Logistics

- Discuss youth preferred method of communication.
- Set the tone: you and the Lodge Chief should decide communication method, and implement a plan for the Lodge leadership
- Accommodate individuals



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Strategies for Effective Communication: Methods

- Keep everyone in the loop;
- Always keep your Lodge Chief in the loop
- Implement and reinforce the “chain of command”.



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Recruiting and Engaging

- Recruiting Lodge leadership can be challenging, and unique for each group
 - Youth on youth recruitment
 - Work with adults one on one to identify commitment level
 - Near-youth are often busy, and well suited for behind the scenes work.



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Conflict Resolution

- Conflict strategies:
 - Youth vs. Adult: Usually communication issue. Train the adult on how to provide decisions and limitations background, and train the youth on BSA guidelines and Lodge realities.
 - Youth vs. Youth: With Lodge Chief, sit down with both individuals to hash the problem, and find a solution. Let Lodge Chief lead.
 - Adult vs. Adult: The key here is to counsel both adults about the purpose of the Order, and their role. It can have a significant impact on resolving a disagreement with this perspective.



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Case Study: My Youth Disappeared

- One of your adult committee advisers contacts you and states that he cannot reach his youth chairmen to work on an upcoming event. How do you work through this?
 - Ask how they are communicating. See if this is the way you know the youth typically communicates. If not, reach out to both and broker a new communication strategy.
 - Reach out to your Lodge chief to contact the youth chairman and get his side of the story.
 - Make a personal response to the individuals to enable better communication, and determine their plans going forward.



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Case Study: Past Chief

- Your past Lodge Chief is a great leader, and is well regarded within the Lodge. He is now 21, and is overshadowing the current Chief. What do you do?
 - You must counsel the adult members of your Lodge, and in particular your committee Advisers and other Lodge leadership to come to you or the Lodge Chief with operational questions during an event.
 - Counsel your near-youth past chief in this instance. Explain to him the role of an adviser, and ask him to back away from the action. Mentor him on how to direct questions, from youth and adult members, to the current leadership. Make sure to remind him the importance of giving each generation their own opportunity to grow and develop leadership skills.



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Case Study: Who is My Adviser

- Your Lodge Chief approaches you with news that one of his Chairmen doesn't know who his Adviser is and has never met him. He has tried emailing him but doesn't get a response.
 - Similar to the first scenario, as Lodge Adviser, you should work with both youth and adult to determine communication preferences. Perhaps there is a mismatch.
 - Reach out to this adult via a phone call and ask if they still have time for this commitment. If not, you may need to replace this person.
 - In the interim, work directly with the affected chairman to keep him engaged – don't let him lose momentum for his task



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Summary and Resources

- The job of Lodge Adviser – managing the Lodge Leadership – is difficult and rewarding.
- Try the techniques in this session to improve communication between members, and help you work with all members.
- You are not alone! Resources include:
 - The Lodge Advisers Handbook
 - The Chapter Operations Guide
 - OA Training Materials: training.oa-bsa.org



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